In the Claims:

1 (currently amended). A method for detecting early cancer, comprising the steps of:

(a) measuring the level of a human midkine protein, or a ~~fragment thereof~~ human midkine protein that lacks a domain near the N terminus, or both in a ~~biological sample~~ body fluid using a one-step sandwich enzyme immunoassay, and,

(b) comparing the measured level obtained in step a) to a control human midkine protein level of a healthy subject, wherein an elevated measured level as compared to the control level indicates the presence of early cancer.

2 (original). The method according to claim 1, wherein the early cancer is gastric cancer.

3 (original). The method according to claim 2, wherein the gastric cancer is at stage I.

4 (original). The method according to claim 1, wherein the early cancer is hepatocellular carcinoma.

5 (original). The method according to claim 4, wherein the hepatocellular carcinoma is at stage I.

6 (original). The method according to claim 1, wherein the early cancer is lung cancer.

7 (original). The method according to claim 6, wherein the lung cancer is at stage I.

8 (currently amended). The method according to claim 1, wherein the ~~biological sample~~ body fluid is serum or urine.

9 (currently amended). A method for detecting early cancer comprising the steps of:

(a) contacting a body fluid ~~biological sample~~ with ~~an antibody~~ a pair of antibodies that specifically binds to a human midkine protein, a ~~fragment thereof~~ human midkine protein that lacks a domain near the N terminus, or both, wherein one of said antibodies comprises an avian anti-human midkine antibody, and

(b) comparing the level of binding between the ~~antibody~~ antibodies and the midkine protein, a fragment thereof, or both of step (a) to a control binding level of a healthy subject, wherein an elevated binding level as compared to the control level indicates the presence of early cancer.

10 (withdrawn).

11 (withdrawn).

12 (withdrawn).

13 (currently amended). A method for assessing cancer prognosis, comprising the steps of:

(a) measuring the level of a human midkine protein, a ~~fragment thereof~~ human midkine protein that lacks a domain near the N terminus, or both in a ~~biological sample~~ body fluid both before and after treatment using a one-step sandwich enzyme immunoassay, ~~and~~,

(b) comparing the level measured after treatment to a level measured before treatment, and

(c) correlating ~~the~~ a difference in the measured levels ~~obtained from step a)~~ to cancer prognosis, ~~to thereby assess cancer prognosis~~ wherein a reduction in measured level after treatment is indicative of successful therapy and positive prognosis.

14 (original). The method according to claim 13, wherein the cancer is gastric cancer, hepatocellular carcinoma, or lung cancer.

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15 (new). The method, according to claim 1, wherein the one-step sandwich enzyme immunoassay includes an avian anti-human midkine antibody and a rabbit anti-human midkine antibody.

16 (new). The method, according to claim 13, wherein the one-step sandwich enzyme immunoassay includes an avian anti-human midkine antibody and a rabbit anti-human midkine antibody.